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ABSTRACT

This unit of the Flexible Learning System (FLS) provides training on how to use classroom planning to avoid management problems and techniques to reduce inappropriate behavior in the classroom. Management is approached as the process of organizing and structuring the classroom, its activities, and the responsibilities of staff and children. Management is directed toward helping children assume responsibility for their own behavior in a climate designed to maximize individual freedom and minimize disturbances in the learning environment. Criteria for classroom management establishing rules and limits, scheduling, and the provisioning and use of materials are explored in the context of minimizing the occurence of management problems. Practice is provided in developing rules and limits, arranging classroom activities, developing daily plans, demonstrating the arrangement of materials, and extending and adapting classroom materials to meet individual needs. In a discussion on how to handle inappropriate behavior, topics include: determining the problem; anticipating and redirecting inappropriate behavior; attending to positive behavior, contingent use of classroom activities, using time out, and why punishment is an inappropriate form of classroom management. Activities involve classroom observation, demonstration, working with children, thought and problem-solving activities. (Author/SB)

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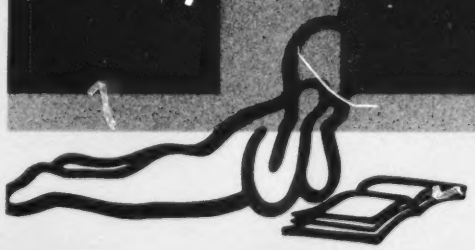

managing the preschool classroom

2

THE FLEXIBLE LEARNING SYSTEM—COMPETENCY-BASED LEARNING UNITS FOR ADULTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Managing the Preschool Classroom

Preschool - Third Grade

by

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OVERVIEW

Classroom management means that events in a learning situation are supervised and sequenced in some systematic way. Management involves the organizing and structuring of: the classroom, the day's activities, and the responsibilities of the adults in the classroom. To create a learning environment that is exciting to children, yet is at the same time supportive of classroom management, will require careful planning.

Classroom management begins long before the first child enters the classroom. It is much easier to establish standards for appropriate behavior and for understanding of classroom procedures if the "stage is set" from the beginning. Section I of this unit will review those planning activities that are needed for an environment that facilitates effective management.

Although careful planning will prevent many problems, even in the "best" of classrooms some children misbehave. In addition, children who are observed misbehaving in the same way (e.g., throwing a block) are likely to be doing so for different reasons.

In order to determine the reasons, and to help each child gradually gain control over his own behavior, teachers should acquire a variety of management skills. Section II of this unit will provide you with various management approaches that can minimize inappropriate behaviors in the classroom.

**Recommended format.*

How to Use this Unit

This learning unit was designed to be used by an individual, or in a group setting with an instructor.*

I. On Your Own

a. Read unit at your own pace.

b. Do the activities related to what you read.

c. If you should have trouble with an activity or question, turn the page and look at the "Hints and Answers" provided for that activity.

II. With an Instructor

a. Read a topic (for example, Physical Arrangement).

b. Do the related activities.

c. Answer the activity questions.

d. An instructor will offer workshops for each topic. In the workshops you will have an opportunity to share your work and experiences with other learners. Workshop learner sheets are included in this text.

e. Do only one topic between workshops.

f. If you should have trouble with an activity or question, turn the page and look at the "Hints and Answers" provided for that activity.

g. Ask your instructor for assistance as needed.

SECTION I: GETTING A GOOD START

Objectives

When you complete this section, you should be able to:

1. Group classroom activities into areas that will facilitate efficient classroom management.
2. List criteria for the development of classroom rules/limits.
3. Develop good general ground rules and area limits for your classroom.
4. Develop a daily plan that meets the criteria for a good daily plan.
5. Demonstrate, in one area of your classroom, systematic arrangement of materials.
6. Extend and adapt classroom materials to better meet the needs of children.

GETTING A GOOD START

Physical Arrangement

The space, materials and equipment available will vary from classroom to classroom. Whatever you have available should be arranged in the best way possible to create an exciting learning environment that also promotes classroom management. Daily contact with an uncluttered, well-planned environment allows them to set their own pace in making choices of activities and helps them to focus their attention on the activities and materials that the teacher has planned to have available.

The way that furniture in the room is arranged, the way that the function of areas is defined, the way that traffic patterns are established--all these influence the way that children and adults interact in a classroom. For example, a child wants to play with the Lego building toy but the only work space provided is a table in the front of the room. The manipulative toys are kept in the back of the room. He goes to get the Lego set and on the way back to the table he collides with another child. Result: the pieces scatter, the other child is upset, and the teacher looks up in dismay! This situation might have been avoided if the manipulative toys were stored and used in the same area.

We have all heard statements such as, "Teacher, Evonne knocked over my building" and "Ted ran over my picture with his truck." To minimize this type of disruption, arrange your classroom so as to cut down on as many intrusions as possible.

Activity 1

a. Draw a picture of your classroom (including furniture, windows, radiators, other stationary items).

b. Indicate by dotted lines how people ordinarily move about the room.

c. Observe your classroom for three days and record any problems in traffic flow.

Questions:

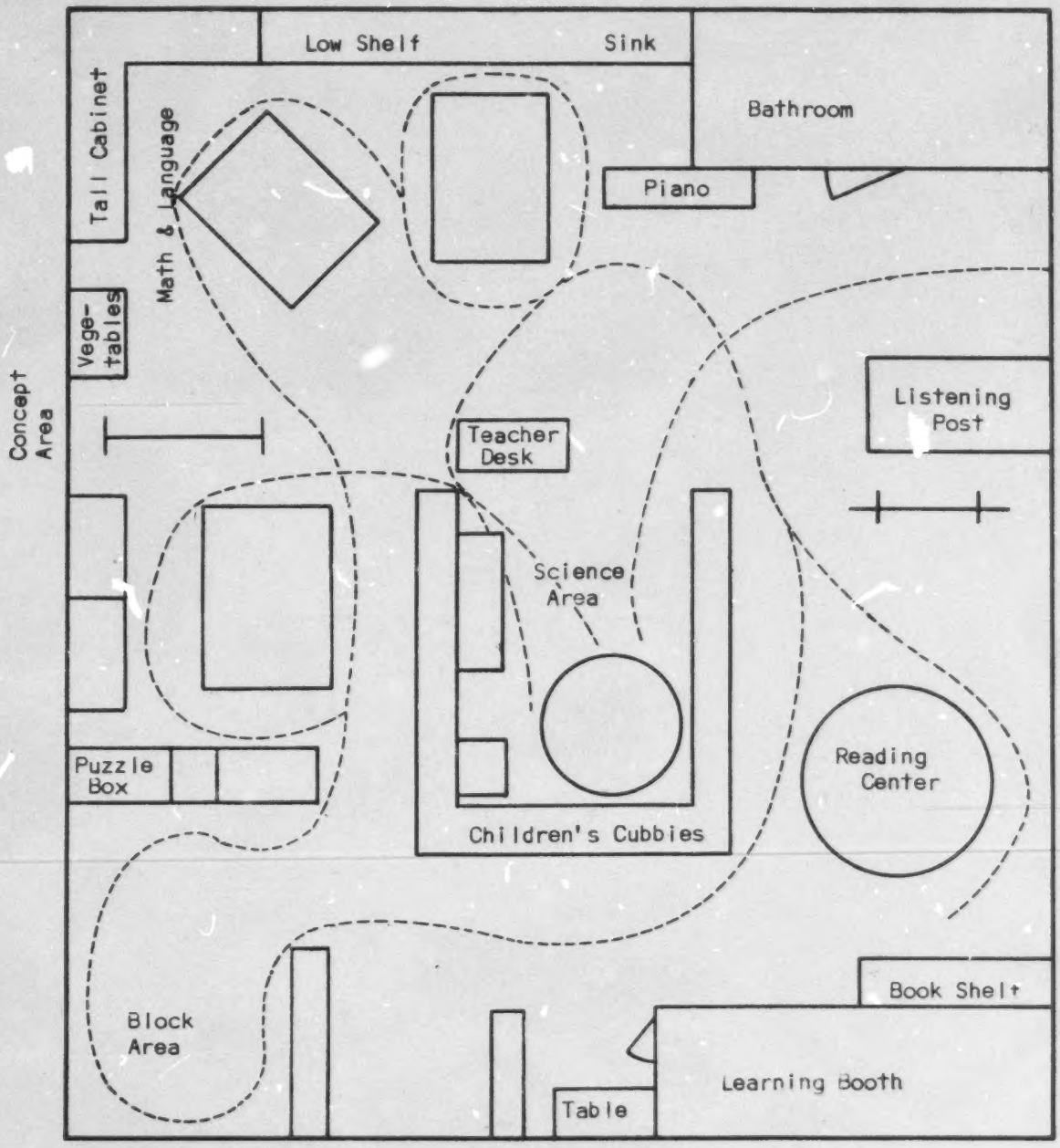
1. Are some areas always crowded?

2. Did you notice more accidents (bumping, etc.) in certain areas?

Hints and Answers (Activity I)

If you are having trouble with this activity, try selecting one ch[illegible] and watch his mov[illegible]ent from area to area.

Study the following example:



In this example there appears to be congestion around the science area as children go back and forth to their cubbies.

Many problems can be avoided if the teacher plans and organizes the classroom and its activities in a way that makes it easy for the child to act acceptably. Children should not have to base their behavior on constant reminders from the teacher. Children model their behavior from adults and also directly from the cues provided within the environment. Each area, by the types of activities available, can help children learn what kind of behavior is acceptable within that area. If the environment gives conflicting cues to children, inappropriate behavior is likely to occur.

A simple diagram* may help illustrate the relation of space to acceptable activities:

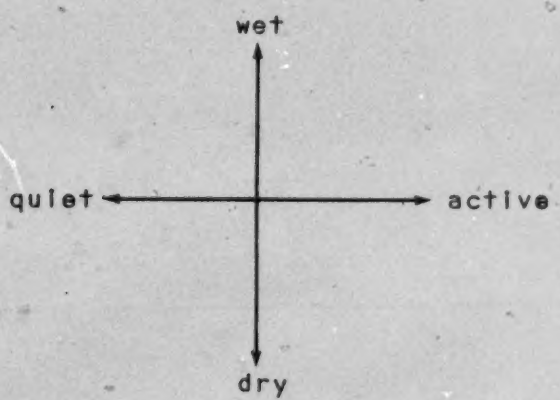
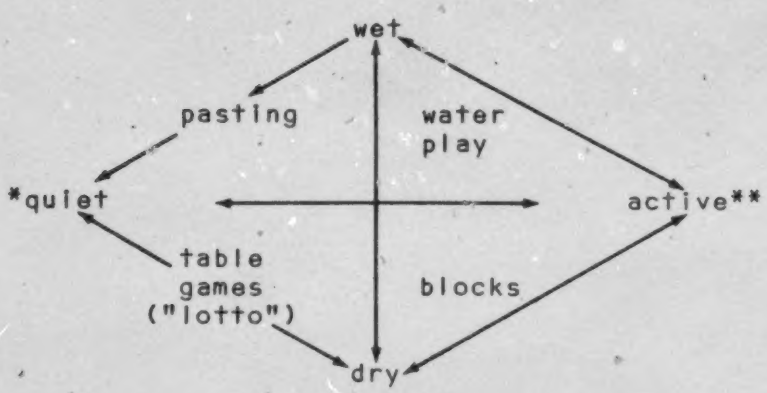


Diagram idea borrowed from Nancy Rambusch, American Montessori School.

The opposite ends of the arrows (quiet-active, wet-dry) represent activity areas that give different cues to children's behavior and that should be physically removed from each other.

If the block area (active) is in the same area as the library (quiet), the child is given conflicting cues as how to act appropriately. Should he be quiet? Can he be noisy when playing with blocks?

By filling in the sections of the diagram, we can play the activities and behavior that are most compatible for each area.



Quiet activities refer to those activities that usually take place at a surface with sitting available. The term does not mean "no talking."

**Active activities refer to those activities that do not require sitting.*

Activity 2

List all the activities in your classroom that could belong in each area.

Questions:

1. Are your classroom activities occurring in appropriate areas?
2. How are your areas defined? (partitions, shelves, etc.)
3. Does your classroom structure make it easy for children to be comfortable--to be involved without imposing on the rights of other children?
4. Taking into account any traffic problems noted in Activity 1, what changes do you think need to be made?

Hints and Answers (Activity 2)

The following are typical classroom activities:

quiet-wet	wet-active
eating	sand play
paste	water play
paper maché	easel painting
finger painting	watering plants

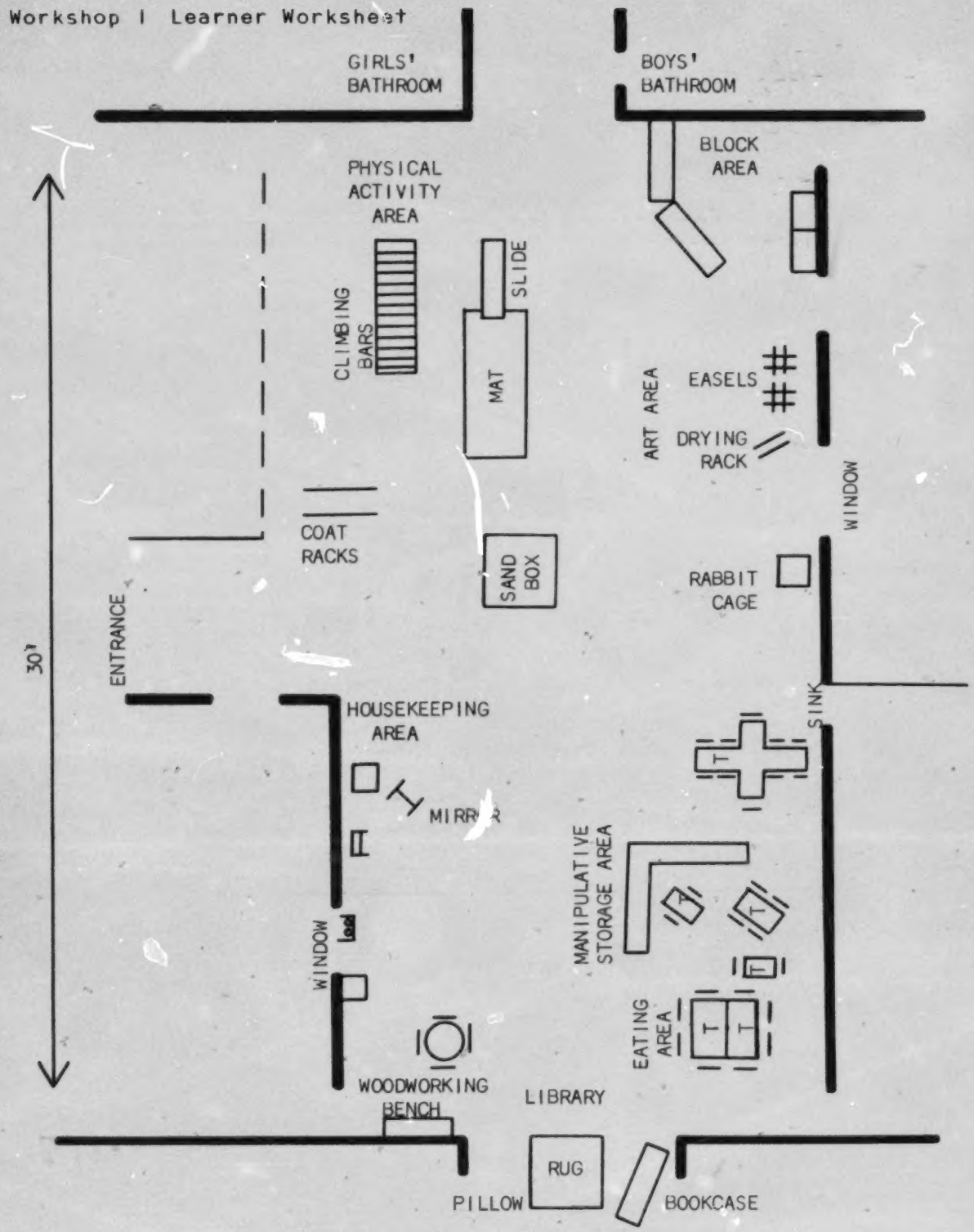
quiet-dry	dry-active
listening	housekeeping
story time	dancing
puzzles	woodworking
table toys (lotto, etc.)	building games
	blocks, etc.

Summary:

Here are some general guidelines to follow:

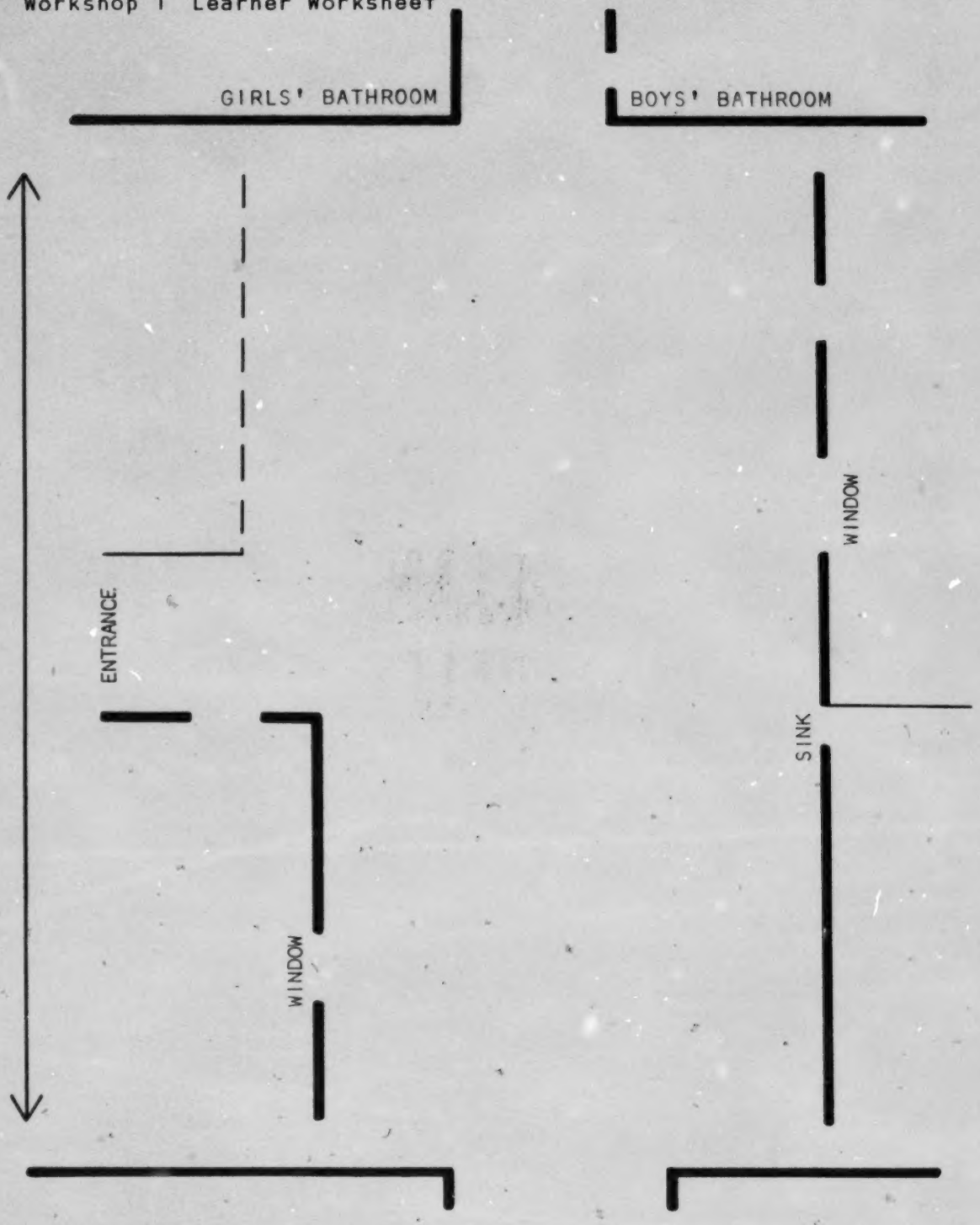
1. The environment should be simple and uncluttered.
2. The environment should not give conflicting cues to children.
3. Traffic patterns should permit small-group functioning and allow for easy flow from one activity to the next.
4. The environment should be the result of planning by the teaching team and should result in children learning how to function independently.

Refer to unit entitled Arranging the Classroom for Children for more specific suggestions.


GIRLS' BATHROOM
BOYS' BATHROOM
BLOCK AREA
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AREA
CLIMBING BARS
SLIDE
MAT
ART AREA
EASELS
DRYING RACK
WINDOW
COAT RACKS
SAND BOX
RABBIT CAGE
30'
ENTRANCE
HOUSEKEEPING AREA
SINK
MIRROR
MANIPULATIVE STORAGE AREA
WINDOW
EATING AREA
WOODWORKING BENCH
LIBRARY
RUG
PILLOW
BOOKCASE

Workshop 1 Learner Worksheet

Name _____



Rules and Limits

In addition to a carefully organized room, it is necessary to have a plan for using the room that is clearly understood by everyone. Children, as well as adults, feel more secure when they know what is expected of them. The establishment of a limited number of ground rules gives everyone this information. Ground rules relate to overall regulations for classroom functioning. Here are some examples of ground rules.

1. When it is necessary to speak to a person individually, go directly to that person.

2. If you are going to leave the classroom, let the teacher know where you are going.

When developing class rules, keep the following criteria in mind:

1. Ground rules should be easily understood by everyone (one interpretation).

2. Ground rules should be stated clearly and positively.

3. Ground rules should be short and concise.

4. Ground rules should be few in number.

5. Ground rules should "fit" the children's developmental level.

6. Ground rules should change throughout the year as the children grow and the need for rules changes.

In addition to ground rules for total class functioning, each area of the room may have specific limits. For example, the block area will have limits relating to the use of blocks, the art area will have others relating to use of supplies, etc. It is important to involve children in the development of area limits. Children need to understand the why for limits if they are expected to follow them. It's best to discuss limits in the area with small groups of children. Try to elicit examples from the children. Using pictures or stories, you might role-play familiar situations with the children, demonstrating the need for limits. You might also present an object, asking the children to think about problems that might occur related to that object (e.g., one bicycle). As the limits are developed, you might post them in the appropriate area. This notice serves not only to put in print the children's thoughts, but to alert volunteers and parents to what the limits are. Pictures may also be drawn to illustrate the rules.

ANIMAL LOTTO
ART AREA

Activity 3

Task 1

Put a check next to the statements you feel are examples of good classroom/area limits.

1. _____ Walk in the housekeeping area
2. _____ Hammers are to be used at the work bench
3. _____ Materials are to be replaced when not being used so that others may use them
4. _____ No running in the room
5. _____ No throwing of blocks
6. _____ Put paint brushes in water jar when finished
7. _____ Blocks are for building
8. _____ Children and adults live by the same rules

Task 2

What are your classroom rules/ limits now? List them.

General Ground Rules	Area Limits

Hints and Answers (Activity 3)

1. Items 1, 2, 6, 7, are examples of good limits; they are:

   short and concise

   positively stated

   easily understood

   open to only one interpretation

2. The following are examples of some classroom rules/area limits:

Rules	Area Limits
1. Tell someone when you are angry instead of hitting first.	1. Counter tops and tables are to be cleaned after painting or clay work.
2. Always ask before you take something that someone else is already using.	2. Return your game to its right place.
3. We call people only by names they like.	3. Put your doll clothes back on the hooks when you have finished playing.
4. We walk in the classroom.	4. Use a quiet voice in the library area.

Questions:

1. How were your classroom/ rules limits formulated?
2. Which rules are most frequently ignored?
3. Do they meet the criteria for rule development?
4. Would you change any rules/ limits?
5. What do you think is needed to improve your classroom structure?

Parents should also be involved in the establishment of classroom rules. Parent goals and values must be respected. You as a teacher must reinforce the child's own experiences (culture and environment); you must promote the culture of the child, not your own as a teacher. This is particularly true in the establishment of classroom rules. For example, suppose a classroom rule states, "If someone hits you, you tell the teacher or you walk away." But the child is taught at home, "If someone hits you, you hit him back." Here you as teacher would be setting up a conflict between home and school; you would be imposing your own values. A more appropriate rule may best state, "We should not hit anyone in the classroom," with a clear procedure to follow if "hitting" occurs. To avoid conflicts between home and school, teachers should work with parents and together decide on appropriate classroom rules.

Summary:

1. Ground rules give everyone a clear understanding of how to function (behave) in the classroom.

2. Area limits help children understand how to use the room.

3. Rules/limits should be:

   stated clearly

   stated positively

   short and concise

   few in number

4. Parents should be involved in the development of classroom rules.

Name _____

Workshop 2 Learner Worksheet

Instructor
Observation Form - Planning

Planning	Yes	No	Comments
1. Plans are developed and written for each day of the week.			
2. Plans include:			
a. General objective for week.			
b. Specific objectives for each day.			
c. Materials to be used during each day.			
d. Quiet and active activities.			
e. Provision for teacher-initiated and child-initiated activities.			
f. Responsibilities of adults present each day.			
g. Provision for large- and small-group activities.			
3. Plans are accessible to adults so that they can refer to plans as needed.			

Workshop 2 Learner Worksheet

Instructor
Observation Form - Planning

Planning	Yes	No	Comments
4. All staff participates in planning sessions.			
5. Time is set aside each day for planning.			
6. Time is set aside each week for evaluation planning.			
7. Plans are also flexible.			
a. Time is extended for children to complete activity if they are very involved.			
b. Time is shortened if children are not interested or involved.			
c. Additional activities are planned for use as needed.			
d. Teachers respond spontaneously to learnings occurring in classrooms, incorporating these into day's plans.			
8. Plans reflect individual needs of children.			
a. Activities are written in for individual children.			

Scheduling

In planning for classroom management, you need to provide for day-to-day continuity. Planning the daily schedule lets everyone know at about what time a few basic activities will occur and what the sequence of events for that day will be. Consistent daily routines can greatly reduce confusion and wasted time. The completion of one activity often becomes the cue for the start of the next. A schedule that provides for change of pace and variety while at the same time letting children know what they should be doing, or what they are to do next, helps develop independent behavior in a comfortable setting.

A daily schedule helps the teacher:

1. plan for needed materials and equipment.

2. work more effectively with children (eliminates "What do I do next?").

3. work more effectively with other team members (roles and responsibilities are clear).

It helps children:

1. develop a sense of time and sequence.

2. feel more comfortable (know what will happen).

3. become more independent (know what to do next).

Activity 4

Write down an example of your daily schedule. (Use additional sheets.)

Questions:

1. Do children understand what is expected of them? Describe incidents to illustrate.
2. Have you provided adequate time for transitions between activities?
3. Have you provided for special needs of children?
4. Have your provided opportunities for children to make real choices as to activities and materials?
5. Have you provided for both quiet and energetic activities?

Hints and Answers (Activity 4)

Consider the following when answering the activity questions:

1. Evidenced by:

   easy removal and replacement of materials

   responding to class

   children listening to teacher directions

   children caring for own personal needs (toilet, snacks)

   responsibility for room's maintenance

   children's spontaneous movement from area to area

2. Evidenced by:

   advance notice given to children to let them know clean-up time is near

   providing time for children to complete nearly finished work.

   smooth transitions that involve the children (imaginary train, etc.)

3. Evidenced by:

   individualized instructional periods

   flexible schedules with plans altered if needed (group restless, etc.)

   opportunities for choice by children

4. Evidenced by:

   availability of various activities and materials

   encouraging each child to think about what he would like to do

   providing time for children to complete chosen activity

5. Evidenced by:

   active activities not extending for so long that they become over-stimulating

   quiet activities

   activities not extending for so long that children become restless

6. Evidenced by:

   clear role responsibilities defined

   specific activities and tasks assigned to team members

In addition to a daily time schedule it is important to develop specific plans for each day of the week. There are several criteria to keep in mind when developing your daily plans.

1. Plans should specify the objective for the day.
2. Activities designed to meet objectives should be included.
3. Materials to be used should be listed.
4. Plans should provide teacher time with individual children.
5. Plans should include both quiet and active play.
6. Plans should show evidence of a balance of teacher-initiated and child-initiated activities.
7. Plans should provide for some large blocks of time for uninterrupted work/play.
8. Plans should be flexible and provide opportunity for the teacher to respond.

In order for your plan "to work," all adults in the room must work as a team. It is advisable for team members to plan specific responsibilities in the various areas of the classroom. By planning which activities will require adult guidance and which will not, you can provide children with a choice of activities that you will be able to supervise effectively. Try to avoid planning too many activities that require teacher supervision at the same time.

When you are working with a small group of children in one area, situate yourself in a place where you can view the other areas of the room so that you can be alert to other children as they need your attention. When only a few children can participate with an adult at any one time, it is advisable that the other adults move around the room to monitor the remaining areas, or you might decide to cut down on some of the choices available.

Parents and other adults in the classroom need to be involved in planning their roles and activities if they are to have successful experiences. Find out what the participants themselves feel

are their particular strengths and interests in working in the classroom. Some adults may feel more comfortable if there is a choice of specific jobs or activities--e.g., reading a story, supervising a cooking experience, or accepting an area assignment (blocks, dramatic play).

During staff conferences, the teaching team should plan how all adults will function in the classroom. Here are some suggestions:

Charts

Charts can be used to help you plan what activities will be occurring in the various areas of the room. A chart can serve as a reminder for all adults working in the room, showing what the weekly objectives are and how to use the room accordingly so as to reinforce those objectives. A chart can also show where people are in the room and how they relate to space and each other.

Example

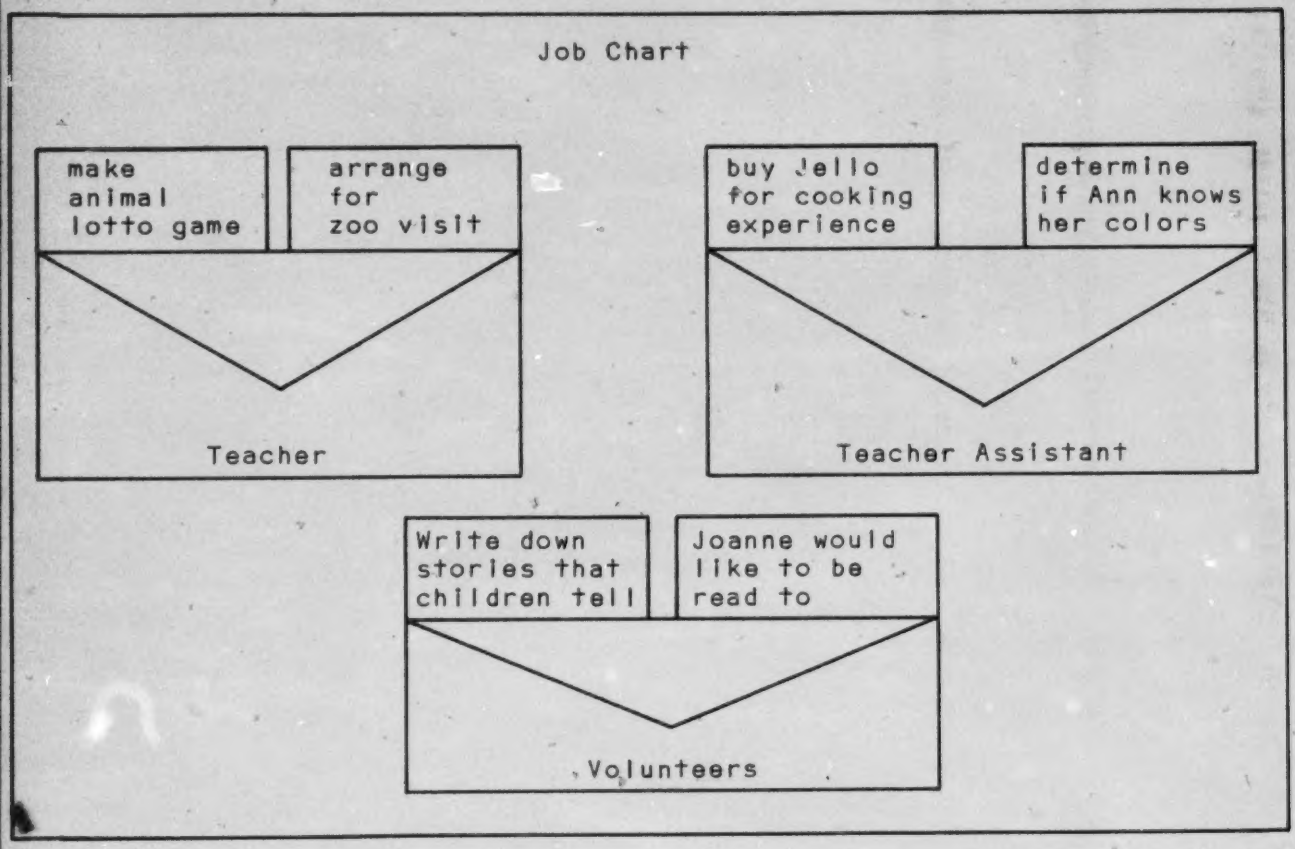
Objective:
To determine the number of shapes each child can recognize and name.

Area	Activity	Responsibility
Art Area	Paper to be cut in circles, squares, and triangles. Ask: What shape do you want?	Joanne
Reading	Read the book, The Circle and the Line.	Don
Block Area	Check understanding of shapes during free choice.	Don
Concept Formation	Shape color forms "matching" game with felt board.	
Outdoor Play	Draw different shapes on play ground, play jumping games, movement games, making shapes without bodies.	Joanne and Don

Example

Job Card Chart

A simple chart with pockets containing 3"x5" cards, with specific duties and tasks that need to be done during the week written on them, can facilitate integration of adults working in the room.



Activity 5

The following continuum suggests a scale for self-evaluation on planning.* Circle the numeral that you feel best indicates how planning occurs in your classroom.

1

no time schedule or preparation of materials.

2

time schedule--some preparation of materials.

3

time schedule--general objectives for week stated.

4

time schedule--general objectives for week plus list of specific daily objectives and activities.

5

Items listed in 2, 3, & 4 plus: specific objectives and activities for individual children.

If you circled numeral one or two, complete task 1.

If you circled numeral three, complete task 2.

If you circled numeral four, complete task 3.

If you circled numeral five, skip this activity.

Adopted from an article written primarily by Glen Nimnicht, with contributions from Francione Lewis, Betty H. Tuck, and Mary Griffin

Task 1

A. Decide on a major objective you wish to concentrate on for the week.

B. Look at each area of your classroom and brainstorm ideas as to how you might organize that area to promote your weekly objective.

C. Choose one area of your room and rearrange it (add materials, take away others, etc.) to stimulate learnings around your objective.

D. Plan specific activities related to your objective for that area.

E. Determine which activities will need adult supervision and decide which team member will be responsible.

A. Weekly Objective_____

C. Area	D. Activities (include materials needed)	E. Responsibility

Hints and Answers (Activity 5, Task 1)

A. Develop Senses and Perceptions

C. Area	D. Activities (include materials needed)	E. Responsibility
Art	Collage Activity	Suzanne
Set up materials on table--(space for four children)	paste newsprint paper crayons, chalk varying texture shapes from fabric, cardboard, wood	

35

Task 2

A. Decide on major objective(s) for the week.

B. Refine general objective by planning a specific objective for the day.

C. Look at each area of your classroom and brainstorm ideas as to how you might organize each area to promote your daily objective.

D. For each area of the room plan specific activities that relate to your daily objective.

E. Determine which areas or activities may need adult supervision and decide on team responsibilities.

A. Weekly Objective(s)_____

B. Daily Objective _____

C. Areas of the room	D. Activities	E. Responsibility

Hints and Answers (Activity 5, Task 2)

A. Develop Senses and Perceptions

B. Develop Sense of Touch

C. Areas of the room	D. Activities	E. Responsibility
Science	Learning Episode: Thermometer--hot and cold water	Suzanne
Woodworking	sandpaper--rough and smooth wood	Ted
Large group	feely bag game feels and guesses what he thinks it is	Suzanne
Music	Teach song: "Water That's Hot"	Suzanne and Ted
Library	Read: "How Things Feel"	Ted

Task 3

A. During team planning, decide on major objective(s) for the week.

B. Based on information you have gathered on each child, refine general objective by planning specific objectives for individual children.

C. Group objectives for children who have common needs.

D. Develop specific activities related to your objectives for these children.

E. Determine which activities may need adult supervision and decide on team responsibilities.

A. Weekly Objective _____

B. Specific Daily Objective	C. Children's Names	D. Specific Activities	E. Responsibilities

Hints and Answers (Activity 5, Task 3)

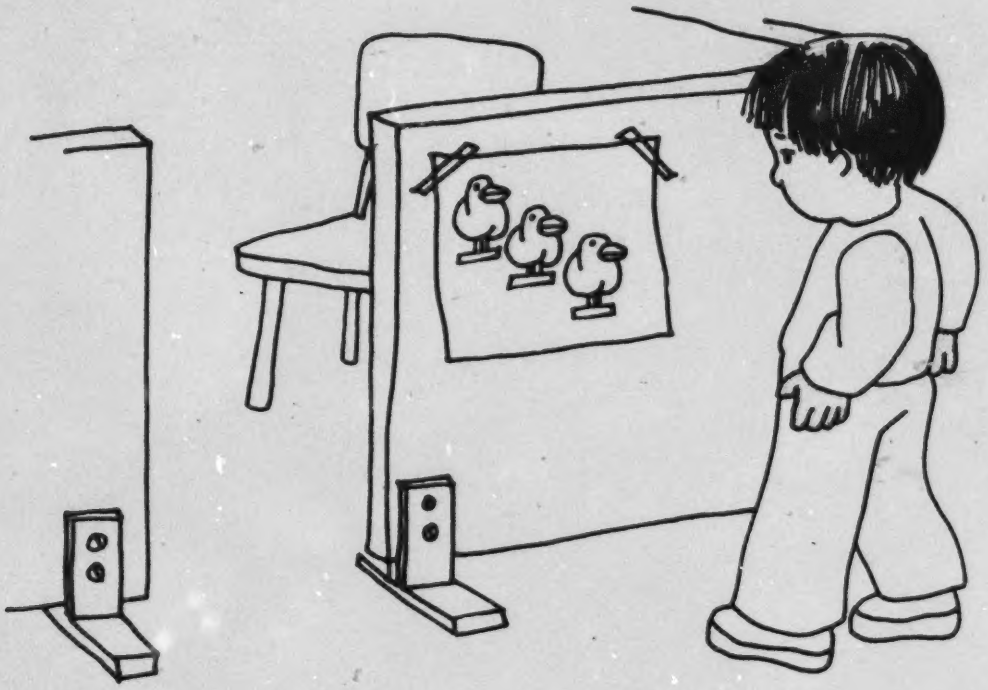
A. Develop Senses and Perceptions

B. Specific Daily Objective	C. Children's Names	D. Specific Activities	E. Responsibilities
auditory discrimination	Larry, Vic, and Patricia	sound can games	Ted
visual discrimination	John, Maria, and Evonne	pegboards:	Suzanne
same and different through sight		As children watch, make a pattern on the pegboard; then give children empty boards and ask children to produce the same pattern --compare replication with model	

It is also necessary, when planning, to work out the procedure by which your children will choose and/or be guided to activities. Especially during free choice, it is helpful to provide a mechanism for managing free time. During free choice, children decide on their own activities from the choices the teacher makes available to them. That is, freedom is not absolute but within limits set by the teacher. The major problem that occurs during free choice is the overloading of an activity area.

The following are suggestions for handling the problem:

1. Outside each area, post the number of children who are allowed within that area at any given time. If your children cannot recognize numerals, use dots or pictures or tangible objects. When the number is reached, the area is automatically closed.



2. Limit the area by controlling the size (space). This can be done by the amount of work space, seating, and materials that are made available.

3. Set up a choice board. This is a fairly structured way of setting area limits. To enter an area during a given activity period, a child would need a pass (card, tag, etc.) taken from a choice board. The number of passes the teacher posts on the choice board for each area limits the number of children in the area to which it corresponds.

Choice boards can help children make conscious decisions about what they want to do. They are meant to be flexible. Children should be allowed to make as many choices as they desire within any one time period. The teacher should observe what areas children choose most frequently, taking notes of needs and interests. You may want to guide children to new areas and experiences if you observe them constantly working in only one or two areas of the room. Observation of children's interests during this time will help you plan more adequately.

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Name _____

Workshop 3 Learner Worksheet

Criteria for Evaluating Daily Plan

	Present	Absent
1. General objectives are specified	☐	☐
2. Activities designed to meet objectives are included	☐	☐
3. Materials are specified	☐	☐
4. Responsibilities for adults, (e.g., teacher, aides, volunteers) are indicated	☐	☐
5. Evidence of balance of teacher-initiated activities	☐	☐
6. Provisions for small-group/individualized activities	☐	☐
7. Provisions for quiet and active activities	☐	☐

Materials

Another aspect of managing a classroom concerns the use of curriculum materials by the children. In order for children to be able to function in their classroom, they need to know where materials are located and the rules for working in the room. The way materials are utilized may also help avoid many problems. For example, instead of one large box of crayons, provide each child with his own box of crayons. If possible, provide more than one set of high-interest materials.

Systematic arrangement of classroom materials is important to management for the following reasons:

1. A systematic and consistent arrangement of materials satisfies children's needs for security in the classroom and reinforces the sense of order..
2. A teacher facilitates children's ability to get and replace materials when she has arranged materials by centers of interest.
3. When materials are arranged systematically, they are visually clearer to children.
4. Arranging materials in a systematic way makes the environment more attractive, the atmosphere calmer and less chaotic.
5. Arranged materials cue the teacher to the periodic replacement of materials.

It may be necessary for you to repackage your classroom materials. Boxes may be too big or too flimsy. The original package may not be designed for use by young children (difficult lids, etc.). The contents should be visible or clearly labeled. The way materials are stored and arranged helps make materials more easily accessible to children; it also serves the teacher by making classroom management easier.

Activity 6

Answer the following questions before beginning Task 1.

Questions:

1. To what extent do the children in your classroom select the materials they wish to play with?

2. Are the children responsible for getting and putting away their own learning materials?

3. Are materials arranged in the same place on open, uncluttered shelving until time to rotate or change materials?

4. What is the physical condition of the materials that are available (fresh, clean, attractive, and colorful)?

Task 1

1. With the classroom teacher, choose the shelving unit for materials you're going to rearrange.

2. Repackage materials, if necessary, placing a label (code) on the outside of the container. Make sure you have a range of materials (type and complexity).

3. Replace materials on the shelves; be sure materials are at or below child's eye level.

4. Place label on each shelf immediately below the label on the container holding material.

Hints and Answers (Activity 6)

List the kinds of boxes and storage materials you may need. Remember that all items in containers should be equally accessible. Leave adequate shelf space. Children should see what's inside the container.

Suggested containers:

Trays (plastic school-lunch type)

Baskets

Clear plastic boxes of various sizes

Low cardboard boxes (boxes holding beer or soda cans in grocery store are good)

Clear plastic ice-cream containers

Large plastic detergent bottles (cut off top)

Management problems often arise when children are bored or frustrated. If children are challenged within the range of their abilities, problems are less likely to occur.

Individual differences among the children with respect to motor, perceptual, language, cognitive, and affective development must be provided for if you are to create a learning environment that fosters each child's growth and development. Providing a range and a variety of materials is essential to achieve this goal. Too often materials are put on the shelf and remain there throughout the year. It is a good idea to hold back some of the materials at the beginning of the year and then gradually to introduce them by periodically replacing older materials.

When planning which materials to have available, consider the complexity of the material. You may be able to head off potential frustration if you are sure that a child does not yet have the ability to use the material (e.g., advanced motor skills necessary). By intervening with an easier task for that child, you can avoid failure and frustration.

Even if you have only a limited supply of materials, it is possible to extend, adapt, and vary use in such a way as to provide a variety of experiences using the same set of materials.

For example, you make a concentration card game consisting of sixteen cards:

four have numeral 1 written on them

four have numeral 2 written on them

four have numeral 3 written on them

four have numeral 4 written on them

The regular procedure is to place all the cards face down on a table. The child is then asked to turn over two. If they are a match, he may keep the cards; if not, he must turn them back (face down) and wait for his next turn.

Here are some variations for use of these same materials.

1. Children match numeral pairs by sight only.
2. Children must match and name numeral pairs.
3. Children may sort numerals in four piles.
4. Children match one numeral with another numeral that is "one more."
5. Children match one numeral with another numeral that is "one less."
6. Children may make up their own use-they may stack cards, build a house, bridge, etc.

Activity 7

To provide you with practice in extending and adapting a game, make the following lotto game.

Materials:

Four 6"x6" cardboard squares divided into 2" squares with each square colored a different color.

red	yellow	blue
green	brown	black
purple	white	orange

36 - 2" squares; color four of each color

4 white
4 red
4 blue
4 yellow, etc.

A. During group discussion session, brainstorm how many ways you might use this game.

B. Take this game into your classroom and see how many ways you can use it to provide a range of experiences for different children.

C. Record your activities and bring your notes to group discussion session.

Questions:

1. Did you change the number of pieces--add some? Take some away?

2. Was there a difference in how the game was used with children of different ages--e.g., three-year-olds vs. five-year-olds?

3. Did the children make up any uses for the game?

Summary:

The materials available to children and the ways they are used are important elements of effective classroom management.

Materials should:

Be easily accessible

Be arranged neatly and systematically

Be attractive and appealing

Provide a range of materials from simple to complex so that children have the opportunity to be involved in a variety of experiences.

Name_____

Workshop 4 Learner Worksheet

Material Evaluation - Specific Areas

Planning	Yes	No	
Housekeeping			
1. Are there enough props for dramatic play (clothes, telephone etc.)?			
2. Are materials stored in a way that allows for easy access?			
Block Area			
1. Are blocks arranged on shelves that are low enough for the children to reach easily?			
2. Are shelves marked with shape of blocks to encourage children to put away blocks according to shape and size?			
3. Are there other materials (trucks, animals) that can be used with the blocks?			
Art Area			
1. Are there easels and working space (table, chairs)?			
2. Are there a variety of materials for children to use in their art work?			
3. Are items like scissors, paste, and paper easily accessible to children?			
4. Is there a place for children to put materials to dry (won't be destroyed, etc.)?			
5. Is there a place to store smocks that children can get and put away without teacher assistance?			

Workshop 4 Learner Worksheet

Material Evaluation - Specific Areas

Planning	Yes	No	Comments
Manipulative Materials 1. Are materials displayed on accessible shelves for children to use independently?			
2. Do materials have their own permanent spaces on open, uncluttered shelving?			
3. Is there a variety of games and materials to meet the different levels of children's development?			
Language Arts 1. Are books displayed attractively and accessible to the children?			
2. Are books periodically rotated--new books added?			
3. Is there provision for listening activities (tape recorder, record player, Language Master)?			
4. If children wish to "write" or dictate stores, is there working space available? Paper, pencils, crayons accessible?			
Woodworking 1. Is there a storage facility to allow for children's clean-up and classification of tools?			
2. Is the wood nontoxic, soft, and in ample supply?			
3. Is there a variety of tools? Are they sturdy, durable, "real"?			

SECTION II: MINIMIZING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Objectives

When you complete this section, you will be able to:

1. Identify and define inappropriate behavior for which teacher intervention is necessary.
2. Determine the most appropriate management approach for inappropriate behaviors.
3. List the steps to follow when using a redirection management approach.
4. Specify three steps to use when giving positive attention.
5. Demonstrate increased use of positive attention for appropriate behavior in your classroom.
6. List the procedures necessary for phasing out contingent use of classroom activities.
7. List at least four reasons why punishment is an inappropriate management approach.

MINIMIZING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Ideally, the classroom environment should be designed to respond to the learners. The teacher should not need to use rewards or punishment to motivate the learner. A major objective of a sound early childhood program is to help develop self-directed learners by helping children gain inner control. It is important to recognize this objective and to accept the fact that preschool children at the beginning of the year will probably not be self-directed learners. This section will attempt to give you some approaches for helping children reach the final goal, that is, becoming self-directed, involved learners.

In your classroom you will find a wide range of learning styles/modes and degress of independence. You will find some children to be highly self-directed, finding great pleasure in the activities of the classroom. A number of your children, however, will probably need teacher support at the early stages of learning: attention, praise, and recognition. There may also be a few children who have little inner control and for whom teacher support alone is not enough.

As you go through the year, and get to know your children by a continual process of assessment and observation, you will learn what degree of direction is needed for each child. This unit is designed to help you individualize your management approaches so that you will be able to meet the varied needs of your children.

Determining the Problem

Since this section will deal with "what to do" about inappropriate behavior, first try to define what inappropriate behavior is. There is no one way to define inappropriate behavior. What one teacher finds acceptable another teacher may find unacceptable. What is considered inappropriate in your classroom will depend on the child and on your own standards and limits about what is tolerable. In general, however, there are certain behaviors that most people would agree are inappropriate in a classroom. These fall into the category of actions that result in harm to another person (e.g., biting, spitting, etc.).

Too often teachers assume that when a child acts inappropriately in the classroom, he/she has serious problems at home. Although sometimes this is true, we should first take a careful look at what happened to that child at school that day. Perhaps the child is tired, hungry, or coming down with a cold. Perhaps your program does not meet the developmental level of the child; you might be asking too much, or too little. Perhaps your limits are unreasonable. Sometimes children are thought to be acting inappropriately when they are really just acting their age.

Good planning is based on knowledge about each child, his culture, language, lifestyle, health history, and changes in the child's environment (e.g., new foster home, newborn brother or sister). Systematic observations will give basic information that can help you determine each child's interests and needs, strengths and weaknesses, and pattern of behavior. If a child continuously acts in what you consider an inappropriate manner, discuss your concerns with his parents, comparing his behavior at home and the center. This exchange of information may help determine the reason for the child's behavior. But first you must recognize what constitutes an inappropriate behavior for you.

Observation Activity

To help determine if a child's behavior is really "inappropriate":

1. Choose a child who you think is a "behavior problem."
2. Plan with the classroom teacher, a specific time when you can observe this child.
3. When you are doing your observation, it is best not to be involved in the classroom activities-"stand back" and just watch.
4. Write down what you see that child doing.
5. Bring the observation to group session.

After you have determined whether a child's behavior is really inappropriate, it is important to determine how often, and under what circumstances, the behavior occurs. Sometimes you may overestimate a problem is you find it unpleasant or underestimate a problem if you don't want to admit a problem really exists.

Activity 8

The following activity provides one way of recording the frequency of "inappropriate" behavior exhibited by a particular child.

1. Fill in child's name.
2. Describe the behavior you are going to observe. (What you see him do!)
3. Observe him carefully for one week.
4. Mark an (X) every time you observe the behavior. Place the (X) in the room area where it occurs.

Recording Child Behavior

Name_____

Behavior_____

Sample: Areas of the Room

Dates:	Dramatic Play	Blocks	Library	(Others) specify			

Hints and Answers (Activity 8)

The following activity provides one way of recording the frequency of "inappropriate" behavior exhibited by a particular child.

1. Fill in child's name.
2. Specify the behavior you are going to observe.
3. Observe him carefully for one week.
4. Mark an (X) every time you observe the behavior. Place where it occurs.

Recording Child Behavior*

Name Janet Chang

Behavior Biting

Areas of the Room

Dates:	Dramatic Play	Blocks	Library	(Others) Specify		Table Toys	Water Table	Math	Private
				Science	Outdoors				
5/7		X							
5/8									
5/9							X		
5/10		X							
5/11									

It may be helpful to involve the total team in this activity. Use separate forms and compare at end of week.

Questions:

1. How many times did you observe the behavior?_____

2. Was the behavior exhibited as often as you thought?_____

3. How distracting or interrupting was the behavior?_____

4. Was the child having trouble in every area/activity or in only one or two?_____

5. Was the child having trouble with other children?_____

6. Discuss how you might use this information to help this child.

Systematically recording inappropriate behaviors may help you decide several points:

1. Whether there really is a problem.

   Example:
   Ms. Lee thought Shawn was probably very insecure because she thought that she was always sucking her thumb. When Ms. Lee started recording Shawn's thumb-sucking behavior, she found that Shawn sucked her thumb only two or three times during one day!

2. Whether certain behaviors are exhibited only under certain circumstances, with certain people, or in certain activities.

   Example:
   Joe hit other children only when they took something that belonged personally to him, or Joe whined a lot only when working with Ms. Lee, or Joe is restless only at group story time.

Some possible reasons for children's behavior may be drawn from observations, but the behaviors exhibited are only problem signals and may not alone indicate what the problem is. As mentioned earlier, the knowledge gathered about each child's family, culture, lifestyle, and health record will help you determine what is best for each child. Consider the following example:

Annette's mother works nights and is not able to prepare breakfast for Annette in the morning. Her older sister brings her to the center. Annette is always clinging to the teacher. Annette has a tremendous appetite and often takes other children's food.

Keith is an only child. His mother is very protective of Keith and "babies" him. Keith will not play in the block area or sit on the floor to interact with the other boys. He says he doesn't want to get his pants dirty, so he just sits at a table all day, playing with his table toys.

Terry's mother just had a new baby girl. Terry is very big for his age. The teacher is always telling Terry what a big boy he is, but Terry always wants to be next to the teacher, to hold her hand, and to sit in her lap during story time.

What are the behaviors (problem signals) these children are exhibiting?

What do you think may really be the problem?

How could you find out what might be the causes of the problem?

	Behavior	Problem
Annette		
Keith		
Terry		

Summary:

It is important for you to learn as much as possible about each child in your classroom if you are to determine what needs are influencing a child's behavior. As stated earlier, children may act inappropriately if the program itself asks too much of them. Sometimes what you have judged as inappropriate behavior really isn't; knowledge about typical behavior at a given age-level is crucial. Children may have serious problems in their personal lives--problems over which you have little influence. Being aware of these problems, however, will help you develop the sensitivity, caring, warmth, and understanding that are so necessary to the development of a meaningful relationship with each child. Although you may not be able to solve all the problems of your children, you certainly can do your best to meet their varied needs. You can listen and accept them and help them to function more appropriately in a classroom setting. An understanding of why your children exhibit many of their behaviors can give you important cues as to what your behavior should be in relation to each child. It will help you decide which children need more attention and which management approach is most appropriate for each child.

In the following pages we will discuss various management approaches. Based on your knowledge of your children and yourself, you should be able to select those approaches that will be most helpful to you.

Anticipating Problems

As mentioned in Section I, many discipline problems can be avoided altogether if the classroom and its activities are organized in a manner that makes it easy for children to do what is expected of them. A preschool teacher needs to set realistic expectations of what young children are capable of. When children are confronted with tasks beyond their ability they are likely to rebel or give up. The following behaviors are typical of most preschool children:

Difficulty in sharing

Inability to sit still for long periods

Talkative

Expressing their feelings physically

Dependent on adults

Active

Limited motor skills

A teacher who continually assesses the needs, interests, and capabilities of each child will often be able to identify potential problem areas. By anticipating trouble and guiding children to alternative activities (redirection), teachers may prevent many problems. If you know when a child is getting restless, you can guide him to another activity. You may move to an area where you observe tensions mounting. Knowing your children well makes it easier to redirect and facilitate learning. Some children, for example, might need to work out their anger by involvement in energetic activities (e.g., tumbling, punching bag), but others may need to relax with quieter activities (e.g., being read to, water play).

Young children often get upset when there is a change in routine. Even within your normal day's activities, tell children ahead of time what is going to happen. Always try to allow enough time for children to finish what they are doing before moving them into another activity.

When you redirect children, how you do it (verbal and body language) is most important. When you redirect withoug giving children any choices, without helping them to understand their feelings and the feelings of others, you are doing everything for the children. You are not helping them to deal with their own feelings or those of others.

Consider the following statements. Put a check next to those that you feel are good examples of redirection:

1. (Timmy has knocked down the other children's block building.)

___a. "Timmy, let's pick up the blocks and help rebuild the bridge. Then you can build something of your own. Or would you like to do something else?"

___b. "Timmy, tell the children

you're sorry and find something else to do."

2. (Tommy and Bob are splashing water at the water table.)

___a. "This water table is a bit small for five children. Tommy, do you want to help me fill another pan of water for that table over there?"

___b. "Here are some straws and soap powder. Who would like to blow bubbles?"

3. (Billy is throwing sand in the sandbox.)

___a. "Billy, if you want to throw, you need to get a ball."

___b. "Billy, would you and Jeannette like to play with the dump truck in the sandbox."

Every time your children act inappropriately it is not necessary for you to intervene. Children often can settle their own problems. You should encourage your children to try to settle problems for themselves, at the same time letting them know you are there to help them if necessary. When should you intervene? Generally a teacher will use redirection as a management approach under the following circumstances:

When a child is in danger

When she observes potential frustration because she knows the child cannot do without help

When a disturbance is about to spread

When someone's personal property is in danger

When she observes potential trouble due to scarcity of materials

When you use redirection, the following approach is suggested:

1. Ask an open-ended question about the behavior.

   "What's the matter?" Encourage children to talk about what's bothering them. Allow children time to tell you!

2. Give children a chance to settle the problem.

   "What can we do about it?"

3. If necessary, provide an open-ended choice for the child to redirect himself.

   "What would you like to do instead?"

4. If necessary, redirect with a limited choice.

   "Ivon, you may play in the block area or with a puzzle."

When you redirect, it is important to stay with the child until he is actively involved in another activity.

Summary:

By developing redirection skills you can often ward off problem situations before they occur. Redirection involves anticipating problems (where possible) and guiding children to alternatives. Since teacher intervention is minimal, redirection works best with children who do not need a lot of direction.

After a problem situation has occurred, allow children a chance to work out solutions for themselves. If necessary, intervene but structure the situation so as to engage the children in solving the problem. Lastly, if needed, present an either/or choice situation.

Activity 8

Select a child who frequently exhibits inappropriate behavior. Following the steps outlined for redirection, try this technique the next time you observe the behavior.

Questions:

1. Briefly describe what happened.

2. Was the child able to settle the problem by himself?

3. If not, was it necessary to redirect with an open-ended choice or with a limited choice?

4. If redirection did not help this child, what did you do next?

Hints and Answers (Activity 9)

Ask your instructor or another adult in the classroom to observe you when you are trying a redirection technique with a specific child. Together discuss what happened.

Name _____

Workshop 6

Learner's Worksheet
Teacher Direction Checklist

	Yes	No
1. Children select and use materials without adult guidance.	___	___
2. Materials are provided for children by teacher.	___	___
3. Children are expected to remain in group activities.	___	___
4. All children engage in the same activity at the same time.	___	___
5. Children select their own activities and move freely about the room.	___	___
6. Sharing of materials and equipment is required.	___	___
7. Plan for the day is always followed.	___	___
8. Children are required to walk in line when leaving the classroom.	___	___
9. Children wait for adult instructions before beginning their work/play.	___	___
10. Children must always put away materials when the plan calls for the next activity.	___	___
11. Noisy, active play is not allowed.	___	___
12. Children return materials and equipment to their storage places when they have finished using them.	___	___
13. The teacher often sits near an activity, indirectly encouraging play.	___	___
14. Children are told what to do by the adults.	___	___
15. Adults talk and listen to children on a face-to-face level.	___	___
16. The physical environment, with clearly defined interest areas, tells children what they may do.	___	___
17. Children's desires are often ignored.	___	___
18. Children initiate plans for work/play and adults help children carry them out.	___	___

Attending to the Positive

Careful observation throughout the year can give you important information about children's behavior that will help you determine how to individualize your planning for each child and how to help children decrease the amount and frequency of their inappropriate behavior. Children misbehave for some reason. This behavior may be a result of something that is happening in the classroom, or it may have its foundation outside the center. In either case, how you react and what you do may also support the behavior. It is important to remember that no matter how inappropriate a behavior may be, there is something causing the child to repeat the behavior in spite of unpleasant reactions.

Example:
A child who often misbehaves may be reprimanded frequently by the teacher (unpleasant result) but the child is gaining teacher attention (which may be desirable).

By your actions you may unknowingly, be causing some children to misbehave more often. Remember, teacher attention comes in many forms; e.g., frowns, threats, and reprimands are signs of teacher attention. Thus the more you frown, yell, or threaten, the more you may be increasing inappropriate behaviors. It is a good idea to ask someone else to observe your teaching behavior to see if you are acting that way with some children. If you observe that one child seems to be exhibiting inappropriate behavior in order to get your attention, then in helping that child develop more appropriate behaviors you will need to be careful how you attend to that child. It should be obvious that this child needs attention; how and when it is given is important.

Here's how:

1. Make sure that your rules and limits are clear and that the child knows what is expected.

2. Pay lots of attention to appropriate behavior. Let children know when they are acting inappropriately.

3. Try not to pay attention to him/her when he/she is acting inappropriately. Be sure to give him/her attention as soon as possible (when you observe positive behavior).

It is obvious that there are times when you cannot ignore behavior. If the child is very distracting to others, you cannot ignore them. When such a problem occurs, minimize your attention and the attention of peers by going over to the child and speaking directly to him; then refer only to the behavior that is causing the problem. Do not personalize.

Example:
A child is very noisy in the block area during large-group story time.

"Your noise is disturbing us. You may join us or pick a quiet game to play with."

Always provide the child with an alternative; don't just tell

him to stop. If a situation has developed to the point where a child is really out of control (fighting, kicking, screaming), he may not be able to listen to words alone. When that happens, it is best to move quickly (sometimes between children) and talk briefly. It might be necessary to hold a child and restrain him from further actions. For some children, the warmth of it serves only to make the situation worse. Knowing your children is the only way to decide what is appropriate. Try to redirect children after such situations. Later when they have calmed down, be sure to talk and listen, again trying to get at the reason for the problem.

With children who "act out" in order to get your attention, try to focus attention on children who are acting appropriately to establish a model for getting attention. For example, if you know that Ian is banging his tinker toys on the table to get your attention, and Sally next to him is building intently, say, "Sally, you are really building with those toys," instead of saying, "Ian, stop that!" If Ian wants your attention, he will probably stop his banging and start playing constructively with his toys. (He has a choice --continue banging and get no attention, or build and get your attention.) When he does start building, it is important to let him know immediately, by your attention, that his behavior is acceptable. As stated before, to make a decision as to how to attend to Ian, you must know Ian. If Ian is not trying to get your attention, if he is bored or frustrated or just doesn't know how to build with tinker toys, your behavior and your approach will be different; you would probably guide Ian to another activity, or sit and help him build.

Knowing your children and understanding why they act as they do cannot be stressed enough.

Summary:

Sometimes children act inappropriately because they want your attention--in any form. If this is the case, it is important that you not give these children a lot of attention when they are misbehaving, as you will only encourage them to misbehave more frequently. Children have needs expressed in their behavior, and it is necessary for you to respond to these underlying needs. Give children like this lots of attention--but give it for acceptable behavior. Even with the most difficult child, there is always something positive you can find in what he is doing--let him know it. Take extra time to sit and talk and listen. Giving of yourself, psychologically, with patience, trust, and caring, is sometimes difficult when behavior is negative--but it is crucial. It's easy when behavior is positive.

Activity 10

Objective:

To practice paying attention to appropriate behavior and ignoring inappropriate behavior.

Procedure:

1. Select six children. Choose three children who you feel are self-directed and three who often exhibit inappropriate behavior.

2. Select an appropriate learning episode for the group.

3. Use a tape recorder (videotape if possible) to record the activity.

4. Concentrate on using verbal and nonverbal attention (smile, wink) with those children who are acting appropriately. Practice ignoring by attending to those children who are "on the job" instead of those who are not.

5. Try to catch every child "being good" (acting appropriately) and let each of them know it.

6. Listen to the tape. Record:

___a. The number of times you hear yourself paying attention to appropriate behavior.

___b. The number of times you hear yourself paying attention to inappropriate behavior.

Questions:

1. Was your attention specific (e.g., "Joe, I like the way you're listening")?

2. Did you use children's names?

3. Was your attention general (e.g., "Good," "Right")?

4. What facial expressions did you use?

5. Was there any physical contact?

Hints and Answers (Activity 10)

If you are not satisfied with your behavior, try this activity again with another group of children.

Contingent Use of Classroom Activities

Some children in your class may have had to deal with difficult changes in their lives that have resulted in a general mistrust of adults. Children who have experienced several foster homes, divorce, death, and perhaps child abuse may withdraw initially from teacher attention. If there are some children of this type in your classroom, another management approach that involves the use of classroom activities is sometimes employed. It is advisable to use this approach only when redirection and use of teacher attention to positive behavior have not helped this child.

However, parents and teachers probably use this approach quite frequently. Knowingly applying its principles to help develop self-direction involves systematic application. Consider these statements:

> "Eat your spinach, Leroy, and then you may have some ice cream."
>
> "After you do your homework, you can go out and play."

The principle is:

> you have to accomplish such and such before you get to do something you desire.

When the approach is applied to the classroom, the teacher requires the appropriate classroom behavior to occur before a desirable activity is offered.

> "Barbara, if you can go without hitting anyone all morning, you can water the plants at lunch time!"

The principle is:

> if the appropriate behavior occurs, the desired activity occurs, but if the appropriate behavior does not occur, the desired activity does not occur.

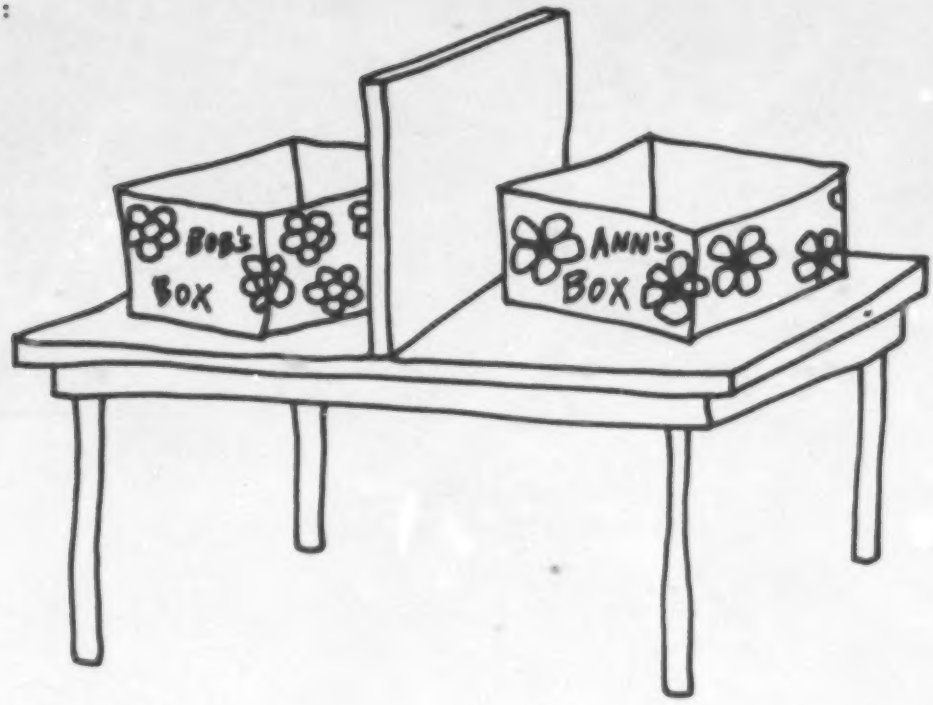
Discuss the desired behaviors with the child in terms of accomplishments. If you accomplish such and such, you will be able to do such and such. Behaviors should not be defined in terms of obedience: "If you do what I tell you, you can do such and such." Rewards for accomplishments lead to independence. Rewards for obedience lead only to continued dependence on the person to whom the child learns to be obedient.

Careful observation of child behavior will help you determine which activities in your classroom might be used to strengthen more appropriate behavior. Adults often ignore those activities that interest and excite children. If you look around your classroom, you will see many "fringe" activities that your children enjoy. Examples: using felt tip pens, passing out snacks, watering the plants.

In determining the activity the child will engage in, most teachers prefer, when possible, to provide quiet activities that will not disturb the other children, e.g., painting, puzzles, clay, cutting and pasting, being read to, etc.

You might set up a special area where the child can work/play with the selected activity. This area should be designated as the location where children work/play only upon teacher direction. If you are using contingent classroom activities with several children, you might organize the materials in this area by providing a container with the child's name on the outside.

Example:



Activity 11

Select two children. Observe them carefully during free choice. Make a list of objects and activities in your classroom that these two children seem to enjoy, that you might use to help them develop more acceptable behavior.

Child 1	Child 2

After you determine which classroom activities you are going to use to support appropriate behavior, the following principles should be applied:

1. The activity promised should be made available immediately and frequently.

   This is very important when first using this approach because a positive action on your part after appropriate behavior early in the sequence helps children learn what behavior is appropriate.

2. The activity should be offered after the appropriate behavior has occurred.

   Initially the behavior requested from the child should be small and simple to perform. You want the child to succeed so be careful not to make your standards unreasonable. You need to be sensitive to signs of improvement.

3. Be consistent in your approach.

   If you want children to be consistent in their behavior, then your behavior must also be consistent. If you provide "the special" activity one day and not the next, the child may feel cheated, discouraged, angry--he may just give up. Don't ignore positive behavior.

This management approach is highly teacher-directed; however, it may be necessary for some children. Good management skills that help children gradually develop inner control often may mean different approaches with different children. Your goal for all the children is to help them become self-directed so you have to learn how to help children become less dependent on you. Following the procedures outlined below will facilitate this process.

1. When you use contingent classroom activities with some children, always remember to use teacher attention also (descriptive praise).

2. Gradually require longer and longer periods of appropriate behavior before providing contingent classroom activities (a morning, all day, a week).

3. As the behavior improves, gradually use less and less teacher attention.

4. Soon the child will be able to function without your extra support because the behavior has become rewarding for its own sake. (Your goal is inner control.)

Summary:

When using this approach, you are in essence making a contract with the child in that you agree to provide certain activities in return for appropriate behavior. When behavior is stated in terms of accomplishments, children will feel proud of their new behaviors. Your goal is to help develop new patterns of behavior. By using this approach with the child who needs it and by following the procedures outlined for phasing out classroom activities, you will be helping this child develop self-direction abilities.

Name _____

Workshop 8 Learner Worksheet

Planning Form

Specify classroom activities (or how you would determine what to use).

Describe how you would present the procedure to the child.

Define your criteria for providing the activity. What does the child have to do?

How do you plan to eliminate the need for using classroom activities with this child in the future?

Time Out — Removal from Activity

Time out involves removing the child from the activities of the classroom. This approach usually is not used unless the child has repeatedly misbehaved or unless there has been a clear rule violation that must be dealt with immediately and that must not be repeated (e.g., John hits Bill on the head with a large block).

With very young children, when a time-out violation occurs, simply move a chair four or five feet from the rest of the children. In a matter-of-fact way, without scolding, threatening, or lecturing, restate the violation of the rule and seat the child in a chair. After about three minutes, tell the child he may join the group again. Upon his return to the group, you should try to note any positive behavior.

Your purpose is to change behavior, not to shame, ridicule, or punish. Statements like "Sit there until you're ready to behave" are not appropriate.

Time out is simply a procedure that lets the child know he has violated a rule and that there is a consequence. Statements like "OK, John, let's take some time out to calm down and then you'll be able to join us again in a few minutes" are appropriate.

Time out must immediately follow the violation of the rule and it must be executed in a calm, matter-of-fact way. A teacher acting upset, or scolding, may just be supporting a child's inappropriate behavior.

Example of time out.

Tony and Betty Ann have been fighting all morning; they are now in the library corner looking at books. Tony grabs Betty's book away from her; Betty grabs the book away from him and pushes Tony into the bookstand; the bookstand comes crashing to the floor. Each child broke a rule. The teacher walks over to the children and says: "You know our rules. You don't hit and you don't take other people's things." Teacher sits each child in a chair, and says, "When I tell you, you may join the group." When the two children reenter the classroom activities (3 to 5 minutes later), the teacher helps by guiding them, if necessary, to other activities. Later in the day, she should bring them together to talk about what happened and why and to develop plans for handling this type of situation by themselves, if it should recur.

Time out is not isolation. It refers to the removal of a child from classroom activities for a very short period of time. Placing a child in the hall, or sending him to the director or principal, is not time out, for that action may be very rewarding to the child. Young children almost always want to be with each other and to be involved in the classroom activities; having to leave the group, for even a few minutes, may serve as a respected consequence for inappropriate actions.

Punishment — Why Not To!

Punishment is probably the most frequently used method of classroom control and is the most ineffective way of helping children gain inner control. One of the reasons punishment is so prevalent is that it is very rewarding to the punisher. Children are usually punished when they annoy or upset the teacher (or parent). As punishment will usually cause some momentary obedience, stopping the disturbing behavior (even momentarily) is rewarding to the punisher. Releasing anger, frustration, and other pent-up feelings may make the adult feel better, but what does it do to the child?

Punishment:

1. Provides a model of aggression for children, because they copy adult behavior and respond to their moods. Punishing techniques show children how to be aggressive to others.

2. Simply represses some behavior. It is short-lived and the behavior will usually recur.

3. Does not teach the appropriate behavior. Children need to learn what to do as well as what not to do.

4. Generalizes. Punishment doesn't just affect the inappropriate behavior--it affects the whole child (and other children in the classroom). It demeans.

5. Associates the teacher with punishment. This can cause children to fear the teacher, avoid the teacher, avoid the school.

6. Does not help children understand their feelings and the feelings of others. Children are more likely to remember only the punishment, and to feel anger and resentment for the adult, than the reason for his punishment.

Activity 12

Read the following descriptions of classroom situations.

1. Leroy sulks if he makes a mistake or if he isn't called on right away during a learning episode. Even though the teacher gives him extra attention when this happens, he continues to sulk.

2. Joanne and Peter are always fighting. The teacher observes that Joanne usually starts it. Separating them and praising them for not fighting has not worked.

3. Pedro spends a lot of time walking around the room, banging things. Once in a while he will come close to joining a small-group activity; but if the teacher gives him attention when he does this, he withdraws!

Question:

1. Which of the management techniques (or which combination) discussed do you think might be best for:

Leroy	Peter	Joanne	Pedro

Hints and Answers

Although there are no clear-cut "right" answers, the following management approaches are probably suitable.

Leroy

Ignoring the "sulking" behavior, with teacher attention to positive behavior.

Peter

Although the inappropriate behaviors are exhibited by both Peter and Joanne, the fact that Joanne usually initiates the "problem" would mean that Peter is probably just defending himself. Talk out feelings and try to let him handle the situation by himself.

Joanne

If Joanne continually violates a classroom rule (no hitting), try time out.

Pedro

As teacher attention caused withdrawal, try contingent use of classroom activities.

Activity 13

1. On a 3"x5" card, describe situations in your classroom where you think a child is acting inappropriately.

2. On another 3"x5" card, describe what you or the classroom teacher did in that situation.

3. If you think you or the classroom teacher should have acted differently, describe on another 3"x5" card what you think should have happened.

4. Bring these cards with you to your next group session.

Name_____

Workshop 9 Learner Worksheet

Describing Child Behavior

Name_____ Age_____How Long in School____

"Negative" Behavior		Assumptions (reasons for)	Attempted Solution	Evaluation Success-Failure
Date	What When			

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